

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method for determining the thickness deviation of a substrate from a predefined standard thickness, the method comprising the following steps:
  - a) placing a substrate into an opening (30) of a substrate holder (8), provided for the substrate, that has a flat upper surface (42);
  - b) focusing on the surface of the substrate (20) and recording the focus position;
  - c) focusing on the flat upper surface (42) of the substrate holder (8) and recording the focus position; and
  - d) ascertaining the thickness deviation of the substrate (20) from the difference between the two focus positions.
2. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the ascertained thickness deviation of the substrate (20) from the standard thickness is stored in a memory, provided therefor, of an electronics unit; and said thickness deviation can be retrieved from the electronic memory for later calculations.
3. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the type of substrate holder (8) being used can be ascertained by way of a code (38) that is provided on the flat upper surface (42) of the substrate holder (8).

4. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the substrate (20) is held in the opening (30) of the substrate holder (8) by support elements (34), there being provided on each of the support elements (34) a spherical jewel (48) on which the substrate (20) rests.

5. The method as defined in Claim 4, wherein the spacing from the upper surface of the spherical jewel (48) to the flat upper surface (42) of the substrate holder (8) corresponds substantially to the standard thickness of the substrate type being used.

6. The method as defined in Claim 4, wherein the support elements (34) are arranged on the peripheral rim (32) of the opening (30) in such a way that they are located at the vertices of an equilateral triangle.

7. A method for determining the thickness deviation of a substrate from a predefined standard thickness, the method comprising the following steps:

a) placing a substrate into an opening (30) of a substrate holder (8), provided for the substrate, that has a flat upper surface (42), wherein the substrate holder includes a one-piece frame having the flat upper surface, the opening having a peripheral rim configured in the substrate holder, and three support elements shaped on the peripheral rim of the opening on which are mounted spheres on which the substrate rests, a spacing from an upper surface

of the spheres to the flat upper surface of the substrate holder corresponding substantially to a standard thickness of the substrate type being used;

- b) focusing on the surface of the substrate (20) and recording the focus position;
- c) focusing on the flat upper surface (42) of the substrate holder (8) and recording the focus position; and
- d) ascertaining the thickness deviation of the substrate (20) from the difference between the two focus positions.